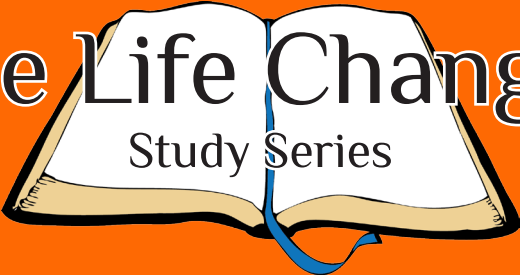


# The Life Changer

## Study Series



### A Call to Baptism

In the Life Changer lessons you spent a lot of time with the Bible. Perhaps you learned many things you didn't know before. You spent a lot of time with Fatma and her family and friends. You read about their struggles with life and faith. But most importantly, you surely spent time in prayer asking God to give you the Holy Spirit and to direct you in this life. In our last lesson we saw that there is much more to learn about the Bible. Indeed you can spend your whole life learning more about God as revealed in the Bible. But there also comes a time when we need to make a lasting decision about what we have learned. In this last lesson we will look at what Fatma and others decided to do. We will look at how they responded to the most important questions of life.



### Lesson 35





### *Shining Stars Series (Philippians 2:14-16)*



*The wind gently pushed Fatma's wavy brown hair off her forehead and cheeks as she stared out over the bay. She hardly noticed the regular lap of the waves on the beach that together with the wind drowned out all sounds of the traffic and vacation village not far away. The mid-afternoon September sun was warm but not hot. It was a perfect day for a baptism.*

*Fatma's almond eyes were upon the sea but her thoughts were drifting back in time to when she had lost her husband suddenly of a heart attack. It seemed that her whole world had come to an end. Yet how different was the picture now! Out of that tragedy and death came a new life for Fatma. Had her husband not died would she have been receptive to the Fate Changer lessons that Sevim had suggested to her?*

*Would she have tried to find the meaning of her life and sought God with her whole heart? "Lord," Fatma prayed, "the only thing waiting for me was eternal death and you changed my fate. But you didn't stop there. Through your Holy Spirit you changed my life. I have new purposes and new hopes and dreams. I have a new reason for living. Thank you, Lord, for what you did in my life."*

*She heard the voice of Gül over the wind and waves as her daughter called to her older brother. They were getting into their bathing suits in the changing booths at the entrance to the beach. School had started and the tourists were gone. Only the church members and their friends would be here to see the baptisms. "Thank you, Lord," Fatma prayed again, "that my children are in the faith. And my mom. I am blessed above measure. And if you hadn't sent Mehmet to be a part of our group, where would we be? He contributed so much. Oh! how he must wish that his wife were here to see his baptism and be accepting of it."*

*Reşat and Afife's children Orhan and Gökhan drew Fatma's attention*



*as they waded into the sea a little bit and gotten their pants wet. Their mother and father had suffered a lot to become believers. Their financial picture was more difficult now but they were strengthened in their faith as they saw God meeting their needs day by day. Fatma remembered the night that Reşat had broken down and given his heart to Christ. What an amazing deliverance that was! Fatma thought of the positive life changes that she was seeing in Afife. Once over-protective of her children and critical and selfish, Afife had softened and become relaxed, easy going and self-sacrificing.*

*Fatma reflected on how Ekrem and Filiz had shown so much spiritual interest and were learning from the Scriptures and putting away fortune-telling. Everyone witnessed in answer to prayer the miraculous healing of Ekrem after the car accident. After the accident Filiz and Ekrem had a remarkable revival in their marriage and they were closer to each other than ever before. How could they have made so much spiritual advancement and then turned suddenly and gone back to spiritualism? It just seemed crazy. But Fatma's hopes were high and she continued in prayer for them. Each person in the group had different spiritual challenges and according to the choices they made there were different outcomes. Ece had been involved in fortune telling yet she came out of that and didn't return.*

*Fatma turned and saw Mert and Gül with their baptismal robes on over their bathing suites. They were looking at their mother as if to say, "Well, how do you like our new outfits?" As the owner of two clothing stores she knew just what to say. "Perfect!"*

*The appearance of Gül and Mert in their robes reminded Fatma that she herself needed to get ready. She made her way to the changing booth hurriedly even as Pastor Hayati began to gather the people together in one place. They had met for church as usual and after an unusually short fellowship dinner they had come to the beach in their various cars. The members and visitors were still gathering when Fatma joined them. She found her mom and held her hand as they*

*stood and listened to Pastor Hayati speak.*

*“This day has finally come. I know that you have looked forward to this day with great anticipation. I also am thrilled more than I can possibly express with words.”*

*“Baptism is special and full of meaning. The first thing I want to share with you is that Jesus said we must be baptized. Jesus said to Nicodemus, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.’ I have met with each one of you to inquire about your knowledge of our faith. We reviewed the fundamental beliefs of our faith together to make sure you understood what it means to be a Seventh-day Adventist. And today at the church you made the baptismal vow that is written on your baptism certificates. It is proper that you understand what you are doing.”*

*“More importantly, I inquired about your religious experience. Have you been baptized by the Holy Spirit? Is Jesus real to you, is He changing your life? Is Jesus the focus of your life? Do you speak with Him daily in prayer? Do you read the word of God every day? Do you have new goals, new aspirations?”*

*“These are very important because baptism is the outward expression of the inward experience. Today, I will lower you into the sea which represents your old life being buried forever. Your sins are buried with the old person. Then I will raise you out of the water symbolizing that you are raised up again to a new life. You are a new creature. Old things are passed away and all things are new.”*

*“As a new person in Christ, His Holy Spirit is in you and you are spiritually connected with Him. His death counts for your death to sin and His resurrection is your assurance that He will raise you to eternal life. This is the confidence that we have. This sets our faith apart from different religions and ideas. We have hope, not based on our performance, but rather on the performance of the sinless Christ.*



*We have the knowledge that Jesus was raised from the dead and that if we remain spiritually connected to Him, we also will be raised from the dead at the last day.”*

*“Baptism is not the end of your religious experience, it is not the final exam. You are just beginning. You will continue to learn of the love of God and Christ all of your life. As you focus your life on Jesus you will become more and more like Him. You are being changed into the image of Christ.”*

*“Sevim, I know that this is a special day for you. I see your face shining over there. Sevim shared her faith with one person and that one person has now brought a whole group to Christ. Sevim, you sowed a seed and God watered it and today is a great harvest. Now all of you, Fatma, Türkan, Gül, Mert, Mehmet, Yusuf and Ece, Reşat and Afife, you are all commissioned with your baptism to do what Sevim did, share your faith with others. That is what we live for, to save others.”*

*“Let’s pray. Father God, I thank you for what we are witnessing here today. These precious people are the purchase of the blood of Your Son. You have drawn them to Yourself and they are Yours. Keep them safe Lord because as Jesus said, they are as sheep among wolves. Give them strength to remain faithful when persecuted. Give them boldness to proclaim your name to unbelievers. Give them hope every day and let Jesus shine in them. Let them have the inner peace and joy that only You can supply. May Your Holy Spirit be in them always. Let Your angels protect them physically from the attacks of Satan. Thank You Lord. I pray in Jesus name. Amen”*

*After the prayer, they sang a hymn together and then Pastor Hayati led Ece and Yusuf out some distance from the shore. He led Ece to his right side and held his left arm out in front of her. She reached her hands out and held firmly to Pastor Hayati’s arm. Hayati then raised his right arm high into the air and said, “Ece, your fate has been changed from death to life by Jesus Christ. Your life has been changed by the Holy Spirit. You are no longer a slave to fortune telling. You*

*are set free by the power of Jesus Christ. Ece, as a demonstration of the change in you, because you love Jesus with all your heart and all your soul and all your strength, I now baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.” With those words Hayati’s right hand came down to her back between the shoulders and he lowered her backwards until she was completely under the water. Just as suddenly as she went under Hayati lifted her back up.*

*Ece’s hands immediately went to wipe the water from her face and as her hands moved away everyone could see her beaming smile. The whole crowd cried out, “Amen!”*

*One by one Pastor Hayati baptized the group. He baptized Fatma last. They gathered again at the shore and sang a hymn together. Then Hayati addressed the entire crowd again.*

*“You have witnessed a great blessing from God today. I know that the Holy Spirit is speaking to some of you who are hearing my voice right now and asking you, “What are you waiting for? You want eternal life. You want assurance of salvation. You know that you have broken your own promises to God in the past. You know that you cannot clean yourself of the shame of sin. Why don’t you accept Christ as your Saviour and Lord and be saved to eternal life? Why don’t you give your life to God right now as I pray?”*

*“Our exalted God in heaven. Thank you for each one of these precious people who were baptized today. We commit our lives to being a family to them and helping them grow in faith and in serving you. For those who have not yet made their commitment to Christ, I pray that your Spirit would be speaking clearly to them right now and that they will understand that it is you who is speaking to them, calling them to yourself. I pray that they will hear your voice and say, ‘Yes’ to eternal life. In Jesus name I pray, Amen.”*

*They sang a hymn and then embraced one another. There was a smile on every face except one. Gülsün stood to one side waiting patiently*

*as one after another the people spoke to the pastor. Fatma noticed Gülsün was wearing a serious face and she approached her.*

*“Gülsün, are you O.K.?” she asked.*

*“Fatma, congratulations! That was so beautiful! I am so happy for you!”*

*“There’s that smile,” Fatma said, “I was afraid something was the matter.”*

*“I need to talk to the pastor,” Gülsün said.*

*Just then the pastor finished his conversation and turned to Gülsün. “Gülsün, I understood that you are wanting to talk to me.”*

*“Yes, pastor,” she said, “I want to be baptized.”*

*Fatma burst into a huge smile and embraced Gülsün. “Oh, I am so happy.” As Fatma pulled away from her embrace she noticed the serious look again on Gülsün’s face.”*

*Gülsün said, “I know that cigarettes have been a problem but I am committed to quit. Pray for me. But I do want to be baptized, I do want to.”*

*Hayati put his hand on Gülsün’s arm and said, “And you will be Gülsün. You will be. God will give you the victory through Christ Jesus.”*

How about you dear reader? You have a clear understanding of the great controversy between Christ and Satan. You have read the plan of salvation and how Christ died for our sins and was raised from the dead for our guarantee of eternal life. You have seen the truthfulness of every word of Scripture confirmed by prophecies. What remains? What remains is a decision and commitment. Won’t you make that commitment

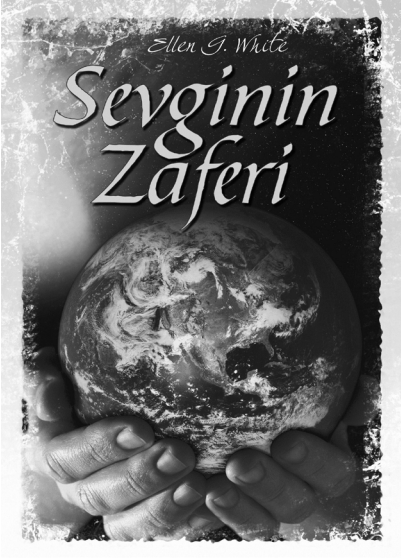
right now? Won't you call the elder of the church and tell him that you want to be baptized? Won't you do that right now? You will never regret that decision.

Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. That you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world." Acts 2:38, 39; Philippians 2:14-16.

Call to commitment through prayer.

## Notlar

## SEVGİNİN ZAFERİ



Kötülüğün kaynağı, henüz çözülememiş bir sırdır. Neden kötülük var? Nereden geliyor? Kötülüğün bir sonu olacak mı? Bunlar yanıtlanması gereken çok önemli sorulardır.

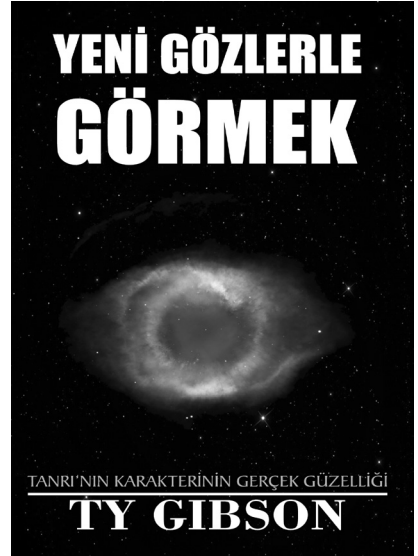
Büyük mücadele, görünen dünyayı, görünmeyen dünyadan ayıran perdeyi aralamakta ve bu dünyanın tüm sakinlerinin dahil olduğu doğaüstü savaşı gözler önüne ermektedir.

Kitap, uğrunda savaştıkları şey için çok önemli olan iki tarafın, iyinin ve kötünün arasında geçen evrensel savaşın nasıl başladığından ve nasıl sonlandırılacağından bahsetmektedir. Geçmişten, şimdiki zamandan ve gelecekte söz etmekte, çok dokunaklı bir ricayla ve ciddi bir uyarıyla sona ermektedir. Bu kitabı okurken, sanki Tanrı ile röportaj yapıyormuş hissine kapılacaksınız.

Güzel olduğu kadar şok edici bir yolculuğa çıkmaya hazırlanın. Okuduktan sonra artık aynı kişi olmayacaksınız.

## YENİ GÖZLERLE GÖRMEK

Pek çok şeyi görebilmek için, kişinin gözleri açık olmalıdır. Fakat Allah ile öyle değil. Gözlerinizi çok fazla açarsanız ya da çok fazla yakından bakarsanız, O'nu gördüğünüzü düşünürken aslında O'nu gözden kaçırabilirsiniz. Pek çoğumuz tam da bu hatayı yaparız. Allah'ı görmeyi umarak insanlara bakarız. Dinlere bakarız. Hatta aynaya bakarız. Kaçınılmaz olarak da hayal kırıklığına uğrarız, zira İlahî Kişi'nin daha güzel bir resmini ummuştuk. Sayısız insan Allah'tan dönmüştür, çünkü O'nu bir kişide ya da bir toplulukta gördüklerini sanmışlardır... ve açıkçası gördüklerinden hoşlanmamışlardır. Elinizde tuttuğunuz kitap Allah hakkındadır.





*Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 2:1-5)*



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This study series is a continuation of the Fate Changer series  
and a product of Istiridye Medya.